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Tuesday, February 5, 2008 | Serving New Braunfels and Comal County since 1852



Residents point out specific areas of discussion on the New Braunfels Outer Loop Recommended Corridor map during Thursday night's TxDOT Outer Loop Study Open House at Canyon High School.

Photo by Karla Held



Outer Loop proposal

Loop meeting draws 500 residents

By Mitzie Stelte

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New Braunfels residents expressed mixed emotions at Thursday's Outer Loop Study open house, during which the recommended corridor for the proposed loop was unveiled.

Over 500 people came out to Canyon High School to view maps, and many expressed great concern after finding their property directly in the path of the corridor.

"It's going to be in my back yard basically," said George Technik of New Braunfels. "I moved out to the country for peace and quiet, and now I'm going to have to listen to traffic."

Stacey Seeger lives on 10 acres in Cibolo, and part of her land would be needed for the proposed corridor's right of way.

"We're not too happy," said Seeger. "We moved out there eight years ago thinking that this was our final resting place."

The outer loop study area is approximately a 40-mile band around the City of New Braunfels encompassing portions of Comal and Guadalupe counties. It was unveiled last June by the Texas Department of Transportation and RJ Rivera Associates Inc., a San Antonio-based consulting firm, and could be one of the largest road projects either county has seen.

The loop would require at least two new crossings over the Guadalupe River and could connect to Interstate 35 on the north side of New Braunfels and to I-35 on the south side of the city.

According to Rudy Rivera of RJ Rivera Associates, Comal County's rapid growth has created a definite need for a solution

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such as the loop, and he said the public meetings have been instrumental in identifying the best corridor.

Not all the homes and businesses can be avoided, Rivera said, but it's about trade-off.

The project currently is not funded and estimates haven't been given. TxDOT officials say construction of the loop could take up to 30 years, but construction of the first segments could begin in as little as five years.

According to TxDOT Area Engineer Greg Malatek, the segments which may be done first would be ones that are natural traffic generators or those that would be developer-driven.

Malatek said some of these areas may include:

- Texas 46 West to Interstate 35.
- I-35 to the New Braunfels Municipal Airport.
- I-35 to FM 306.

TxDOT will present the corridor recommendation to the cities of New Braunfels and Schertz, as well as Comal and Guadalupe Counties this month.

Many of those whose property would not be directly affected didn't express support for the development, but they seemed to accept that it as a necessity for the growing region.

"Everyone's not going to be happy about it, but it's something that's probably going to have to happen for the future of this area," said David Bushnell.

"It's kind of a necessary evil."

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